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NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF CUMBERLAND ISLAND, GEORGIA

BY T. GILBERT PEARSON

The most southern of all the Sea Islands that skirt the coast of the State of Georgia is Cumberland Island, separated from Florida by the waters of the little bay up which one would approach Fernandina from the sea. It lies some distance from the mainland and the intervening territory is covered with extensive salt marshes, through which winds a navigable creek, that composes part of the inland passage used by small boats bound up or down the coast.

About forty years ago Thomas M. Carnegie of Pittsburgh, purchased almost the entire island and near its southern end built a magnificent home, with fountains, flower gardens and other attractive surroundings. This house, "Dungeness," is one of the most elaborate along the Georgia coast, and is a familiar sight to those who in cruising the Atlantic coast, seek the shelter of the Inland Passage.

As Mr. Carnegie's children matured they in turn built homes on the island, occupying the sites where once stood the wide-galleried houses of the old plantation homes. The new owners have never engaged in agricultural pursuits and most of the old fields are now covered with bushes and second-growth trees. The Island also contains much primeval forest land, including extensive areas of oak, tulip, poplar and other hardwood trees indigenous to the region. There is an extensive area of sand-hills covered with beautiful forests of long-leaf pines. There are fresh and saltwater marshes, numerous freshwater ponds and extensive swamps.

Some hunting is indulged in during the winter months, but as no one is permitted to shoot there except the Carnegies and their friends, and as this shooting is not extensive, the wild life has been left in almost undisputed control of this great and varied region. Virginia Deer are abundant and they are in evidence everywhere as one travels about the Island. In no place have I found Wild Turkeys so plentiful.

On May 2, 1921, I landed on the Island and remained the guest of Andrew Carnegie, 2nd, until the morning of May 6. My host graciously put at my disposal every convenience of the Island in the way of automobiles, boats and guides, and in fact accompanied me almost constantly, paddling the canoe while I

fished, photographed alligators (which swarm in the swamps and ponds) and hunted birds' nests.

The following is a list of the 97 species of birds seen on the Island or over the waters in the immediate vicinity. Others were observed but not at sufficiently close range to make identification positive:

1. HERRING GULL (*Larus argentatus*).

Two in immature plumage were seen on the beach May 3.

2. LAUGHING GULL (*Larus atricilla*).

Thirty were counted at various points flying near the beach on May 3. Several were immature.

3. COMMON TERN (*Sterna hirundo*).

Several were in sight May 2 and 5.

4. LEAST TERN (*Sterna antillarum*).

Noted daily flying about the waters near Dungeness.

5. BLACK SKIMMER (*Rynchops nigra*).

A group of three Skimmers was seen. The birds were feeding from the surface as they flew leisurely by perhaps fifty yards from shore.

6. WATER-TURKEY (*Anhinga anhinga*).

An Anhinga with wings spread was seen standing on a dead tree on one of the ponds May 2, and another flew by shortly afterward.

7. FLORIDA CORMORANT (*Phalacrocorax auritus floridanus*).

Ten individuals were counted. The bird is not known to breed on the Island.

8. BROWN PELICAN (*Pelecanus occidentalis*).

On May 2 two adults were seen flying over the bay near the southern shore of the Island.

9. WOOD DUCK (*Aix sponsa*).

Three pairs noted. This species undoubtedly breeds here commonly.

10. SURF SCOTER (*Oidemia perspicillata*).

Five counted near the Dungeness wharf on the morning of May 6.

11. WHITE IBIS (*Guara alba*).

Nineteen adult birds observed. Seventeen were in one flock. There appears to be no record of any nesting colony having occupied the Island.

12. WARD'S HERON (*Ardea herodias wardi*).

A common species. Breeds.

13. EGRET (*Heradias egretta*).

A colony of Herons and Egrets have for many years built their nests in the trees and bushes bordering one of the ponds on the Island. The spring of 1921 was a very dry one and the water in the pond became so low that the trees of the rookery were left on dry ground. Egrets, Little Blue and Louisiana Herons rarely continue to use their breeding grounds under such conditions. Hence the whole colony this spring departed to a swamp so difficult to penetrate that although we saw Egrets and other Herons converging their flight to the new nesting place we did not, upon advice of Mr. Carnegie, attempt to visit the colony. This species appeared to be somewhat more plentiful than the Snowy Egret.

14. SNOWY EGRET (*Egretta candidissima candidissima*).

- Seen daily on Ashley Pond and elsewhere. Perhaps twenty noted in all. Has been known to breed here for many years.
- 15. LOUISIANA HERON (*Hydranassa tricolor ruficollis*).
Appeared to be the most abundant Heron on the Island. Breeds.
 - 16. LITTLE BLUE HERON (*Florida caerulea*).
Common and undoubtedly breeding.
 - 17. GREEN HERON (*Butorides virescens virescens*).
One nest with eggs examined. Several birds seen.
 - 18. BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON (*Nycticorax nycticorax naevius*).
Common species; five nests found.
 - 19. YELLOW-CROWNED NIGHT HERON (*Nyctanassa violacea*).
A dozen or more seen. Doubtless breeds in the swamps.
 - 20. WAYNE'S CLAPPER RAIL (*Rallus crepitans waynei*).
Often heard calling from the marshes.
 - 21. PURPLE GALLINULE (*Ionornis martinicus*).
Appeared to be common. Its notes often heard in the freshwater marshes about the ponds.
 - 22. FLORIDA GALLINULE (*Gallinula galeata*).
One seen in a pond near the sand dunes.
 - 23. LEAST SANDPIPER (*Pisobia minutilla*).
Several small flocks were constantly on the beach and the neighboring flats.
 - 24. SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER (*Ercunetes pusillus*).
Were flocking with Least Sandpipers.
 - 25. YELLOW-LEGS (*Totanus flavipes*).
On May 3 and 4 a flock of about seventy Yellow-legs were watched, as they fed in a shallow fresh water pond near the duck house.
 - 26. SOLITARY SANDPIPER (*Helodromas solitarius solitarius*).
Three or four seen about the fresh water ponds.
 - 27. WILLET (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus semipalmatus*).
Three or four seen flying about the marshes. Undoubtedly they breed here regularly.
 - 28. SPOTTED SANDPIPER (*Actitis macularia*).
Several were recorded.
 - 29. Hudsonian Curlew (*Numenius hudsonicus*).
One flock of five was seen in flight May 2. Two birds appeared the morning of May 6.
 - 30. SEMIPALMATED PLOVER (*Aegialitis semipalmata*).
Perhaps twenty individuals were feeding along the beach May 3 and 4.
 - 31. WILSON'S PLOVER (*Ochthodromus wilsonius*).
Common on the dry beaches and breeding.
 - 32. RUDDY TURNSTONE (*Arenaria interpres morinella*).
One flock seen May 3 and two other flocks May 4.
 - 33. OYSTER-CATCHER (*Hæmatopus palliatus*).
One found on the beach May 4.
 - 34. WILD TURKEY (*Meleagris gallopavo silvestris*).
Wild Turkeys appear to be everywhere on the Island. Mr. Carnegie said that the thirty or forty killed every winter seemed to have no effect on their numbers, which continue to increase every year. These birds were seen frequently in the pasture, in the woods, or along the

roadside. Mr. Carnegie and I each caught a young one but a few days old, on May 4. The same afternoon five gobblers and a hen fed for some time on the golf course within sight of the house.

35. MOURNING DOVE (*Zenaidura macroura carolinensis*).

Only three were seen. If more land was cleared and under cultivation these birds would probably be numerous.

36. GROUND DOVE (*Chæmepelia passerina terrestris*).

Several were noted flying about or feeding by the roadside. They were not so tame as one usually finds them to be in the quiet streets of Florida towns.

37. TURKEY VULTURE (*Cathartes aura septentrionalis*).

Common. One pair had recently laid eggs in silo.

38. BLACK VULTURE (*Catharista urubu*).

This species doubtless is much more common than the three individuals seen might lead one to suspect.

39. MARSH HAWK (*Circus hudsonius*).

One male seen beating along over the pasture May 3.

40. RED-TAILED HAWK (*Buteo borealis borealis*).

One adult noted.

41. FLORIDA RED-SHOULDERED HAWK (*Buteo lineatus allenii*).

Three or four were flushed from their perches in the live oak trees.

42. BALD EAGLE (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus*).

Eagles were seen on three or four occasions—all were adults with white heads and tails. Mr. Carnegie pointed out two of their nests. I understood that there were others on the Island.

43. DUCK HAWK (*Falco peregrinus anatum*).

On May 4, while driving along the beach a few miles from Duneness a Duck Hawk appeared coming from the direction of Fernandina up the bay. It was at the time flying perhaps a hundred feet above the water. Nearing the beach it suddenly dived at an Oyster-catcher we had been watching on the shore. The big shore-bird took refuge in flight, but the hawk almost immediately overtook it, but when within a few feet it swerved upward and towered. It quickly dived for another harmless attack, then pursued its way along the beach parallel with our course. At my suggestion Mr. Carnegie released the engine and the indicator showed a speed of forty miles an hour before we had attained a rate equal to that of the Duck Hawk. The bird, however, appeared to be moving with indolent ease and without haste.

44. SPARROW HAWK (*Falco sparverius sparverius*).

Only two were noted. Conditions on the Island would appear not to be favorable for their presence, the forest growth being too heavy and open ranges too few to meet their requirements.

45. OSPREY (*Pandion haliaetus carolinensis*).

One seen fishing in a pond May 2. Another seen on its nest near the duck house May 3 and 4.

46. FLORIDA BARRED OWL (*Strix varia allenii*).

Two seen and one heard.

47. GREAT HORNED OWL (*Bubo virginianus virginianus*).

One seen May 3, and one heard calling the next night.

48. YELLOW-BILLED CUCKOO (*Coccyzus americanus americanus*).

- Several Cuckoos were found, but only one was examined at close range. This proved to be a Yellow-billed.
49. BELTED KINGFISHER (*Ceryle alcyon*).
A few were found. Not known to breed.
50. SOUTHERN DOWNY WOODPECKER (*Dryobates pubescens pubescens*).
A familiar resident species.
51. PILEATED WOODPECKER (*Phlaeotomus pileatus pileatus*).
Found at various places on the Island. Breeds.
52. RED-HEADED WOODPECKER (*Melanerpes erythrocephalus*).
Only one was discovered.
53. RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER (*Centurus carolinus*).
A fairly common resident bird.
54. CHUCK-WILL'S-WIDOW (*Antrostomus carolinensis*).
Heard calling the early part of every night.
55. NIGHTHAWK (*Chordeiles virginianus virginianus*).
Some were seen hawking about over the pasture late every afternoon. May 2 one was flushed from a single egg on the golf course.
56. CHIMNEY SWIFT (*Chætura pelagica*).
These birds find congenial nesting places in the large chimneys.
57. RUBY-THROATED HUMMINGBIRD (*Archilochus colubris*).
Two males were seen.
58. KINGBIRD (*Tyrannus tyrannus*).
A very abundant species. No nests were noticed.
59. CRESTED FLYCATCHER (*Myiarchus crinitus*).
Very plentiful in the woods.
60. WOOD PEWEE (*Myiochanes virens*).
One seen on May 3.
61. BLUE JAY (*Cyanocitta cristata cristata*).
Only three were noted. Is probably plentiful.
62. FISH CROW (*Corvus ossifragus*).
Abundant. This bird is the curse of the southern Heron rookeries. An egg shell containing a hole of the character made by a Crow was found on Long Slough. The egg was that of a Snowy Egret, Little Blue, or Louisiana Heron. As a rule the eggs of these species are indistinguishable.
63. BOBOLINK (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*).
One small flock of male bobolinks observed on May 2.
64. FLORIDA RED-WING (*Agelaius phœniceus floridanus*).
A familiar resident species.
65. MEADOWLARK (*Sturnella magna magna*).
Present, but not numerous.
66. FLORIDA GRACKLE (*Quiscalus quiscula aglæus*).
Frequently seen. An incompletely built nest was examined on May 2. It was being built in the hollow of a dead tree standing in a pond.
67. BOAT-TAILED GRACKLE (*Megaquiscalus major major*).
Present, and breeding.
68. SWAMP SPARROW (*Melospiza georgiana*).
Two found near Ashley Pond, May 3.
69. WHITE-EYED TOWHEE (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus allenii*).
Very plentiful; undoubtedly breeding.

70. FLORIDA CARDINAL (*Cardinalis cardinalis floridanus*).
Abundant and breeding.
71. PAINTED BUNTING (*Passerina ciris*).
Five males and three females noted May 2-6.
72. SCARLET TANAGER (*Piranga erythromelas*).
Two males appeared near the house May 2.
73. SUMMER TANAGER (*Piranga rubra rubra*).
Common in the oak forests.
74. BARN SWALLOW (*Hirundo erythrogaster*).
Perhaps fifty were seen flying about the golf course and nearby field May 2, 3 and 5.
75. TREE SWALLOW (*Iridoprocne bicolor*).
Many were resting on dead trees in the upper end of a beach pond May 3.
76. LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE (*Lanius ludovicianus ludovicianus*).
Watched an adult feeding a young on May 8. Two others were found.
77. RED-EYED VIREO (*Vireo sylva olivacea*).
Seen on May 3, 4 and 5.
78. WHITE-EYED VIREO (*Vireo griseus griseus*).
Seen and heard daily.
79. BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER (*Mniotilla varia*).
In evidence daily.
80. PROTHONOTARY WARBLER (*Protonotaria citrea*).
A not uncommon species about the fresh water ponds.
81. PARULA WARBLER (*Compsothlypis americana americana*).
A few observed. Breeds.
82. YELLOW WARBLER (*Dendroica aestiva aestiva*).
These birds were frequenting the shrubbery near Mr. Carnegie's house and at Dungeness.
83. MAGNOLIA WARBLER (*Dendroica magnolia*).
Four males seen May 2.
84. BLACK-POLL WARBLER (*Dendroica striata*).
Two were found on the morning of May 2.
85. PINE WARBLER (*Dendroica vigorsi*).
Several found in the pine woods. Males were in song.
86. YELLOW PALM WARBLER (*Dendroica palmarum hypochrysea*).
Noted in company with the Magnolia Warbler.
87. OVEN-BIRD (*Seiurus aurocapillus*).
A numerous species, inhabiting the underbrush and thick woodlands.
88. YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT (*Icteria virens virens*).
Heard calling the night of May 2. None seen.
89. MOCKINGBIRD (*Mimus polyglottos*).
Abundant. Nests containing eggs were examined May 3 and 4.
90. CATBIRD (*Dumetella carolinensis*).
Often seen darting about the shrubbery.
91. BROWN THRASHER (*Toxostoma rufum*).
Frequently noted as we rode about the Island.
92. CAROLINA WREN (*Thryothorus ludovicianus ludovicianus*).

- Many in full song. A nest with young was shown me in the small club house near the golf course.
93. WORTHINGTON'S MARSH WREN (*Telmatodytes palustris griseus*). Heard singing in the marshes daily.
94. BROWN-HEADED NUTHATCH (*Sitta pusilla*). Only three observed. Probably common and breeding in the pine woods.
95. BLUE-GRAY GNATCATCHER (*Polioptila caerulea caerulea*). Often seen and heard.
96. ROBIN (*Planesticus migratorius migratorius*). Only one was seen. This was on the morning of May 6. Does not breed here.
97. BLUEBIRD (*Sialia sialis sialis*). Common in the more open areas. One nest noted.

A MILD WINTER AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE MIGRATION OF BIRDS AT CHICAGO

C. W. G. EIFRIG
RIVER FOREST, ILLINOIS

The winter of 1920-21 was a memorable one for its mildness, not only for Chicago and vicinity, with which the writer is concerned, but for nearly the whole continent. Those members of the Wilson Club who attended the last meeting at Chicago will perhaps mentally put a question mark behind the statement, as regards Chicago at least, for they found the weather decidedly boreal during the last days of December, reaching -4° on the 28th, and plenty of snow too. But that was about the only real wintry spell we had. Lest anyone suspect the writer of undue meteorological enthusiasm or a too lively imagination along weather lines, let me quote from the official monthly summaries of the Chicago bureau. To go back as far as October 1920: "The mean temperature for the month, 61.9° , was the highest October mean recorded since the station was established in 1871. Mild weather was continuous from the 3rd to the 27th. Precipitation was about three-fifths of the normal. Sunshine was above the normal." "As a whole, November was mild with only light precipitation. The mean temperature, 40.20° , was 1° above normal." "In December moderate temperature prevailed throughout the first half of the month, etc. The maximum was 62° on the 3rd, the minimum was -4° on the 28th. No severe storms occurred, with the exception of a period extending from the 13th to the 15th." "January, as a whole, was mild and dry, with no severe storms. Aside from one moder-